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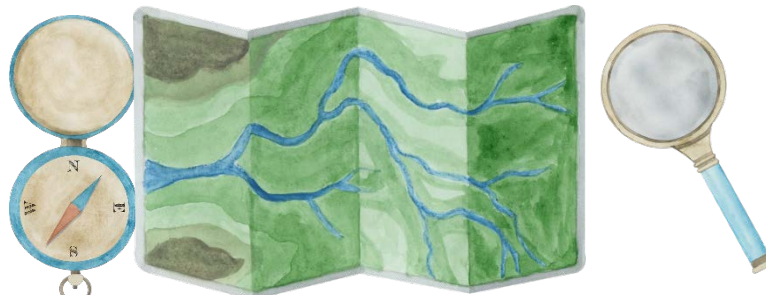
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MENTAL HYGIENE ASSOCIATION „ANTROPOS“

Case description 1

Patricia's journey

–Short summary–



The client contacted us with her mother, after the mother heard on a local TV program that our organization deals with drug prevention. She felt that "drugs have infiltrated their family" and that "She doesn't know what to do with her daughter", especially when it comes to smoking weed, because this has never happened in her family, and she doesn't know exactly what this means. She asked us to "do something with her daughter", because the arguments between the three of them (Patricia, foster father and the mother) increased and she was afraid that "the family will suffer".

It turned out that Patricia smoked, drank alcohol several times a week and also tried out some party drugs, but they didn't work for her. She smoked weed several times, because she felt relaxed when doing so, but she did not feel like she was dependent on it, but she liked the "weedgang" a lot ("they are great guys" Patricia added). When she hanged out with them, she smoked regularly.

During the joint work, the following picture emerged regarding Patricia's drug use: she felt that her life is falling apart, she was very depressed by the conflicts at home, she wanted to be more confident, to have better view of who she is and where she is going. That is why she liked to be with the people who smoked weed. Patricia marked elementary school as the best period of her life, when she went to storytelling and recitation competitions, which she loved very much. It made her feel special, everyone praised her and paid attention to her. During this period, she described herself as a beautiful little girl with a special voice. The most important person in this period was her grandmother, with whom she spends a lot of time, (basically the grandmother raised her). The grandmother practiced with Patricia for the competitions and attended Patricia's performances. Her grandmother was a safe person throughout her elementary school years. She told her grandmother everything, and even discussed her further education options and choices with her. In which Patricia was very confused, because she was an excellent student and could not decide where to continue

her studies until the last moment. Her mother did not support grammar school in any way, and in the end Patricia decided on studying finances. She was looking forward to high school with great excitement, she feels that she managed to fit in well, and there were no problems with her studies. At the end of the first grade of high school, her grandmother died unexpectedly. Patricia marks this as the biggest tragedy of her life so far. She felt lonely. According to Patricia, her mother was not shaken by the loss of her own mother, she returned to work after only a few days. She didn't know what to do with Patricia's constant crying and deep sadness. The mother often yelled at Patricia when she saw her cry.

During session Patricia articulates her fears, which are mostly about rejection because of her looks. The spoken words slowly turn into action, and for the first time in her life she begins to pay attention to what she eats and goes jogging in the evenings. In the meantime, she sometimes meets the "weed gang". And after one of these meetings, she realizes that she doesn't feel safe with the gang, she feels safe with the weed. When smoking weed, it doesn't matter what she looks like, whether she says stupid things, she can just be herself. We dealt with self-identity and what it takes to be herself without weed, by asking many questions.

She successfully graduated from high school and one month later, she passed the entrance exam and was admitted to the university at state expense. Everyone celebrated her, Patricia blossomed. Her father invited her to Italy, she did not refuse, but she did not say yes either to him. She thought about it for a long time, we discussed the pros and cons of the offer, and finally Patricia made the decision to go on the trip. Before the trip to Italy, she spent a long weekend with her mother. Patricia used this opportunity to talk about her grievances and pains (we practiced this over the course of several sessions). She came back having managed to say everything she wanted to her mother, but she still did not feel like that her mother has gotten any closer to her in the social atom. Rather, their relationship came to a neutral state.

The work with Patricia lasted almost a year. We finished it before her trip to Italy, with the option that she can contact me at any time if she feels the need to talk. Patricia used this option. Before the move and since she started university, we spoke once a month. After half a year, these meetings became rare. From time to time, she writes a longer letter in which she reports on her current life situation. She's basically fine. She is studying at the university, a friend group has formed around her, but they do not consume anything other than alcohol and cigarettes. She hasn't smoked weed since.